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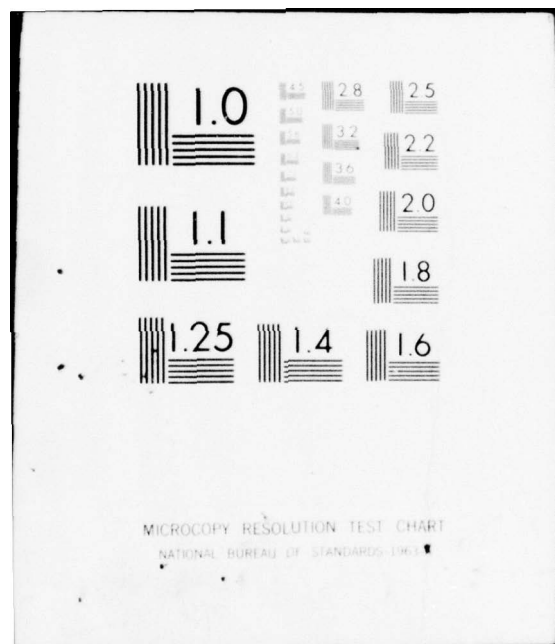
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## URBAN GUERRILLAS IN THE AMERICAS



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**URBAN GUERRILLAS IN THE AMERICAS**

by

**Mr. Kenneth E. Roberts  
Colonel Murl D. Munger**

**30 December 1976**

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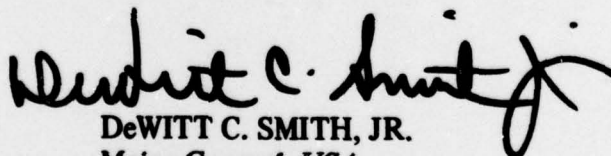
## DISCLAIMER

## FOREWORD

The shift from rural insurgencies of the 1950's and 1960's to acts of terrorism and urban guerrilla warfare in the 1970's has created a dilemma for the governments concerned. Nations of the Western Hemisphere are likely to find this new insurgency a growing threat unless the current economic and sociopolitical problems are satisfactorily resolved. Tactics and equipment developed to combat the rural guerrilla are not readily adaptable to the urban environment; however, the destructive capabilities of the urban terrorists' arsenal have grown enormously. The authors assert that a new strategy for deterring and combating urban guerrillas must be developed, and principles are set forth that will aid in the formulation of such a strategy.

The Military Issues Research Memoranda program of the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, provides a means for timely dissemination of analytical papers which are not necessarily constrained by format or conformity with institutional policy. These memoranda are prepared on subjects of current importance in areas related to the author's professional work or interests.

This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.



DeWITT C. SMITH, JR.  
Major General, USA  
Commandant

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE AUTHORS**

**MR. KENNETH E. ROBERTS** joined the Strategic Studies Institute in 1973. Prior to his present position, he was an analyst in the Office of the Chief of Research and Development, Department of the Army. He has a bachelor's degree in international relations from the American University and a master's degree in international affairs from Florida State University. Mr. Roberts has contributed to published compendiums dealing with national security.

**COLONEL MURL D. MUNGER** has been assigned to the Strategic Studies Institute since his graduation from the US Army War College in 1974. A licensed professional engineer, he is a graduate from the University of Kansas and holds a bachelor's degree in geological engineering and a master's degree in mass communications. Colonel Munger has held a wide variety of command and staff positions. Currently his special areas of interest include Latin American affairs and US Army Reserve Forces management.



## **URBAN GUERRILLAS IN THE AMERICAS**

Only a few years ago, "urban guerrilla" may have seemed a contradiction in terms to a military strategist. Today, terrorism and insurgency in the cities is a primary security threat to a number of established governments in the Americas. Current trends indicate that this pattern is likely to continue with increased dramatic impact, although the threat will vary in form and intensity from nation to nation.

Urban guerrilla warfare is the extension of a political struggle. Its relatively recent development in the Americas resulted partly from the failures of rural insurgency, symbolized by Che Guevara's death in Bolivia in 1967. Guevara argued that mass support was unnecessary for revolutionary success since a small, dedicated, highly-disciplined guerrilla organization had only to confront a "reactionary" government. His *foco* theory maintained that such a confrontation would inspire the people to spontaneously rebel and replace the unpopular regime. Guevara's strategy had three principles:<sup>1</sup>

- Popular forces can win a war against the army.
- It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them.
- In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic arena for armed fighting.

Guevara based his theory on the success of Fidel Castro in Cuba, but he failed to consider the inherent weaknesses and corruption of the Batista regime. The Guevara strategy also did not appreciate the complexity and diversity of Latin America and the basic conservative, corporatist tradition of its rural society.

The failures of rural guerrilla movements throughout the hemisphere during the late sixties resulted from a lack of popular support, little regard among the guerrillas for unique local conditions, insufficient support from Communist countries, and perhaps most importantly, the effective opposition of well-trained counterinsurgency forces. These failures led many revolutionaries to question the viability of a rural-based insurgency, despite Mao's earlier success in Asia. The result in Latin America essentially was a shift of the *foco* theory to the cities, where a small, well-armed and highly-disciplined guerrilla organization was favored by leftist guerrillas as the best vehicle for successful revolution.

The failure of the rural uprisings during the 1960's provided the catalyst for the shift, but other more important underlying demographic realities made it inevitable. The revolutionaries recognized the implications of Latin America's dramatic urban growth and exploited the advantages that urban areas offer to insurgents for unconventional warfare. Many revolutionary leaders still insist that final victory must be achieved in the countryside after the governments have been put on the defensive in the cities, but there is relatively little philosophical debate of "revolution in the countryside" versus "revolution in the cities." Instead, there is a belief that each has a role which will be balanced in final victory.

The widespread use of terrorism has been the most effective tactic of urban insurgency. Terrorism, or the systematic use of terror to achieve political impact, is not a new phenomenon. It emerged first as a state tool in revolutionary France and Czarist Russia, but has become increasingly popular among individuals and nonstate groups since the end of World War II. Groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Japanese Red Army, and the Baader-Minehof gang have gained wide publicity and notoriety as a result of their acts. Within the past few years there has been an increase in the use and destructiveness of terrorism. It has proven particularly effective in the fragile, modern urban environment.

Between 1968 and 1971, the Tupamaros in Uruguay could credibly claim to be among the world's most active and successful terrorists.

They kidnapped and assassinated government officials, businessmen, and foreign diplomats; robbed banks; and bombed public and commercial buildings. They were suppressed, however, in 1972 when the government proclaimed a "state of internal war" and authorized the use of extraordinary powers by the police and Army. Brazil, confronted by a similar situation, attacked the problem in much the same way. The effectiveness of the Uruguayan and Brazilian counterinsurgency campaigns has led some writers to proclaim the failure of urban insurgency as a practical political tool. The widespread terrorism that still occurs throughout the southern portion of the hemisphere and in some other areas of the world clearly indicates that the revolutionaries think differently. Although various nations have controlled their own indigenous urban insurgency, this has sometimes been at great social, political, and institutional expense.

The use of international terrorism by urban guerrilla groups in the future represents not just an isolated, domestic problem for a few nations, but a challenge to all nations at every level of development, and to the international system. Brian Michael Jenkins, a respected US authority on the phenomenon of terrorism, argues that urban guerrilla warfare "is an important developmental link between the earlier theories of revolution and guerrilla warfare and today's international terrorism."<sup>2</sup> Urban guerrillas of the late 1960's and early 1970's sought to gain national and world attention by committing dramatic, violent acts. These tactics have been adopted by others who have gone a step farther by attacking uninvolved individuals and countries. According to Jenkins, "international terrorism is thus an offshoot, the newest branch in the evolution of modern revolutionary and guerrilla warfare theories... It makes the world its battlefield: it recognizes no boundaries to the conflict, no neutral nations."<sup>3</sup>

### THE CITY AS A BATTLEFIELD

The battle for the cities is far from over. Growing urbanization throughout the Americas will mean that guerrillas and terrorists will have greater opportunities for disrupting society and achieving their final victory by exploiting the many advantages which a city offers them as a battlefield.

Three of the most important regional demographic trends are the rapid rate of population growth; the increase in urban population as a percentage of the national total; and the geographic mobility of large



numbers of people as they seek to escape poverty by moving to the cities.<sup>4</sup> This urban expansion emerged during the 1950's and is expected to be sustained for the foreseeable future.<sup>5</sup> Latin America is now more than 60 percent urban, and the population concentrating in these cities is increasingly youthful. By the year 2000, Mexico City is predicted to have 31 million people and Sao Paulo, 25 million.<sup>6</sup> The diversion of migrants to secondary cities, occurring primarily in Brazil, Mexico, and Peru, will increasingly place strains on those areas already having difficulties adjusting to their own internal population increases.<sup>7</sup> The growth of urban areas has occurred primarily because of high birthrates; lower mortality rates; improvements in roads and communications; agricultural mechanization; and the example of those who have achieved social mobility by migrating to the cities.<sup>8</sup>

These expanding urban areas offer certain advantages for insurgency which the guerrillas have exploited. The psychology of urban life tends to make the political use of violence more tolerable and less personal. Cities are more receptive to new ideas, and their inhabitants are less restrained by traditional social controls. There is a much larger audience for propaganda. Events in urban areas achieve much greater publicity and impact than in more remote regions, and guerrilla strength may be easily exaggerated. Cities also offer easier contacts with potentially supportive foreign governments or revolutionary groups, and with the national and international press.

There are many potential participants available for protests, riots, or other political demonstrations in urban areas. Many legitimate grievances are found in the cities, where there is usually a greater awareness or perception of repression or underprivileged status. The inherent anonymity of urban life also helps protect guerrillas. They are able to mix easily with the population, who are usually less suspicious of the sudden appearance of outsiders than the conservative rural peasants. Language problems and ethnic differences are more common and therefore less of an obstacle in the cities.

Cities offer an almost endless variety of politically important targets—foreign embassies and diplomats, government officials, banks, businesses, airports, and subways. The complex interdependence of the modern city means that dramatic effect can be achieved by an easy interruption of its communications, transportation, or public utilities. No security force can continuously and adequately protect all its vulnerable assets.

Guerrilla groups can often find support in the cities among certain

radical student groups, political parties, clergy, and labor organizations. The members of these groups are all familiar with the city, and they do not have the strong class and cultural differences often found between guerrillas and the local population in rural areas. These often highly-educated, antigovernment, youthful urban recruits frequently can provide important sources of intelligence through personal or family connections.

The city also offers ready access to valuable logistical support such as food, clothing, weapons, ammunition, and skilled personnel. There are banks, businesses, and markets where needed supplies can be easily bought or stolen. Stealing from "the system" in the cities is considered much less offensive than stealing from rural peasants. Insurgent acts are also much more easily masked as criminal activity in the cities.

Built-up areas can provide valuable defensive positions and easy escape routes for insurgents. Sewers, subways, and urban slums offer concealment for equipment, supplies, and guerrilla forces. While weapons in the countryside must nearly always be operated at ground level, urban areas allow their operation at many levels. Security forces must search vertically as well as horizontally. The fact that urban terrain is generally man-made (concrete, brick, or wood) makes discovery of guerrilla positions more difficult than in rural areas.

Counter guerrilla forces must be more restrained in retaliation in densely populated cities in order to avoid unacceptable physical damage and alienation of popular support. Most military weapons are not designed for use in an urban environment and are not selective enough in targeting. Communications and command and control are more difficult for counterinsurgency forces operating in cities.

On the other hand, security forces are usually concentrated and strongest in those areas to offset the many advantages which densely populated cities offer to guerrillas. Governments are centered there, and their incentive to fight the insurgency is greater. Usually the best-trained troops are kept near the capital city to protect key governmental installations. Thus, response to insurgent activity can frequently be more rapid than in the countryside, particularly when the intelligence of the security force is good. In cities, guerrillas must avoid curfews, checkpoints, and other official controls.

On balance, however, the advantages of engaging in insurgency and terrorism in urban areas far outweigh the disadvantages. We are approaching an era when entire urban communities may be held hostage by the threats of some desperate guerrilla group. Nuclear,

chemical and biological blackmail are possible even though most such threats to date have been hoaxes. In a number of nations, one or two cities control the wealth and power of the entire country, and a political or military victory in any such city could establish a convincing claim to national control.<sup>9</sup>

### STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE URBAN GUERRILLA

Modern urban guerrillas seek to bring about unemployment, insecurity, and discontent by making it impossible for the government to effectively govern without using repression. The guerrillas seek publicity without evoking public hostility. They want to achieve identity with the people in a common cause in opposition to the established government. To do this, they must be able to portray their activities as morally justifiable acts rather than criminal violence.

There has been no great urban guerrilla warfare theorist to compare to rural theorists such as Mao. Abraham Guillen was one of the hemisphere's first exponents of the strategy and tactics of urban guerrilla warfare. Born in Spain, he immigrated to Argentina in 1948 and became a prolific revolutionary writer during the sixties. Guillen argued that revolution should be waged in the cities rather than in the countryside since a favorable population is more important than a favorable terrain; that when a nation is primarily urban, the revolution should take place not in the mountains but in the largest cities where the population will supply the antigovernment resistance. He also stressed that cooperation is necessary between the laborer and the peasart. Guillen's first book, *Strategy of the Urban Guerrilla* (1966), is credited by both the Uruguayan police and the Tupamaros with providing the models for urban guerrilla activities in Montevideo, as well as in Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Rosario, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and elsewhere.<sup>10</sup>

The typical urban guerrilla is young, with a higher than average education and greater than average affluence. He is often frustrated by a lack of challenges, opportunity, and job satisfaction. His discontent is frequently accentuated by a university-acquired theoretical dislike of capitalism, and he often is disillusioned by a series of governments which he feels have changed little.<sup>11</sup>

Guerrilla organizations are generally compartmentalized into small, independent cells of four or five men in which each member only knows what is essential for his own role, but knows very little if



anything about other cells, their members, and their responsibilities. There is seldom complete agreement on political philosophy or even a common vision of what type of society they would like to substitute for the regime they seek to overthrow. Urban guerrillas are often technically proficient but politically naive. They usually espouse leftist or Marxist rhetoric, but frequently distrust the more traditional left-wing parties. They are not anarchists, but action is prized over words and ideas. Although the movements are primarily national, the guerrillas often think in continental or global rather than just national terms.

Brian Jenkins describes five stages of urban guerrilla warfare. Each stage has different objectives, targets, and tactics:

... a "violent propaganda stage," during which the guerrillas publicize their cause; an "organizational growth stage" during which the guerrillas concentrate on building their organization to prepare for the third phase, the "guerrilla offensive," during which the guerrillas challenge the police for control of the streets, followed by the "mobilization of the masses," during which the guerrillas turn their campaign into a mass movement, leading finally to the last stage, the "urban uprising."<sup>12</sup>

The late Carlos Marighella's "Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla" is probably the best known statement of strategy and tactics by a guerrilla leader.<sup>13</sup> Although written as a guide for Brazilian insurgents, its lessons have been widely adopted.

Urban guerrilla warfare is seldom random or improvised. Surprise and good marksmanship are emphasized as key factors to success.<sup>14</sup> According to Marighella, "terrorism is an arm the revolution can never relinquish."<sup>15</sup> All forms of political violence cannot be described as terrorism, however. There must exist the specific desire for evoking terror in the minds of government officials or certain segments of the population.

Although the definitions of terrorism differ, there is general agreement on certain identifiable characteristics of the phenomenon:

- Terrorists seek to polarize and demoralize the society and to embarrass the government by portraying it as incapable of protecting the system and preserving order. They seek to achieve control of the population by a perverse combination of fear, coercion, and sympathy, and to achieve support for the movement's goals.

- Terrorism is economical in terms of time, effort, and resources.

- Urbanization, industrialization, and modern technology have

increased the vulnerability of modern society. Thus, terrorist acts do not require large armies, extensive training, logistical support, or a sophisticated arsenal. Organization, secrecy, discipline, and conviction are all much more important.

- Terrorism is usually conducted for maximum publicity value. Instant communications and widespread sophisticated weaponry allow one or two determined individuals to turn a local event into a worldwide drama.

- Terrorism is usually rational, although many acts, particularly kidnappings and airliner hijackings, may appear irrational when the target is not the real enemy or perhaps does not even oppose the terrorists' aims. The victims usually, however, possess a significant indirect influence or leverage as symbols of opposed institutions or simply as targets on whom an attack would assure theater and publicity. Innocent victims are often used effectively as bargaining pawns.

- Terrorists often seek to aggravate state to state relations.

- International linkages among terrorist groups appear to be gaining importance. Collaboration among increasingly mobile terrorist forces in widely-separated geographic areas has involved exchanges of training, weapons, personnel, documents, transportation support, refuge and financing.<sup>16</sup>

Despite obvious fraternal sympathies and a common desire to overthrow an existing government, divergent methods and goals have sometimes created hostility, competition, and factional violence among various urban terror groups. The unlikelihood that any one specific movement can achieve victory alone, however, has more often led to strange alliances to create a combined national struggle, and finds international expression in the nebulous concepts of continental revolution and the anti-imperialism struggle.

Between 1968 and 1972, a loose, informal cooperation existed between the MLN (National Liberation Movement/Tupamaros) in Uruguay, the ERP (Peoples Revolutionary Army) in Argentina, the MIR (Leftist Revolutionary Movement) in Chile, and the ELN (National Army of Liberation) in Bolivia. These groups offered each other sanctuary, arms, and financial support. By 1972 the relationship had become more formalized, but could still be best described as a loose confederation. On February 13, 1974, however, the JCR (Junta de Coordinación Revolucionaria) was founded as a formal organization in a joint communique.

On February 20, 1974, the JCR issued a joint declaration of war as an international organization dedicated to destroying the Argentine government. Since then, groups throughout the hemisphere, such as Frepalina in Paraguay, have become associated with the JCR. The JCR maintains official representation abroad through political exiles in Paris and Lisbon, and active contacts exist in Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany, and most South and Central American countries. The ERP has been the most active supporter of the JCR. Although Argentine military forces have dealt severe blows to the guerrillas in recent months, the longer term effect on JCR has yet to be determined.

Notwithstanding ideological opposition to terrorism and "propaganda of the deed," both the Soviet Union and Cuba have benefited from certain terrorist incidents and exploited groups to their advantage when it has suited their policy aims. A number of guerrilla leaders in Latin America have received training in Communist countries.

Today, political, technological, socioeconomic and psychological trends favor the use and proliferation of terrorism. Advancing weapons technology has given extreme destructive and coercive power to small terrorist groups. Toxic chemicals, biological weapons, precision-guided munitions, miniaturization of advanced weapons, and other relatively recent developments might become available to terrorist groups, and may allow them to greatly increase their bargaining power. Imitative behavior, often related to the theatrical effects of media coverage, makes it likely that what terrorists successfully do in one country today will be attempted elsewhere tomorrow.

#### AN URBAN STRATEGY FOR THE AMERICAN ARMIES

Traditionally, most armies have accepted the doctrine of avoiding cities. They have "gone to the field" to train, and studied "field manuals" in order to become effective soldiers. Terrorism is not a generally accepted form of military warfare. It is not a traditional war of soldiers, and no national threat, defined battlefields, fronts, rules, civilians, or diplomatic immunity exist. It requires new concepts of vulnerability, threat, and enemy. The projection of military power and technological sophistication often creates a level of fragility which merely invites terrorist attacks rather than ensures security.

Urban disorder, unlike conventional urban warfare, is basically a police problem. Yet, according to a recent study by the Defense Research Council, a US nongovernmental group, "while basic tactics are



available to handle routine riots and occasional terrorism, the broader concept of a whole program of counterinsurgency is hardly even discussed . . . . The military often is called in to control a situation which has exceeded the capacity of the regular police, but they too lack a doctrine, training, or materials to do more than simply quell mass action."<sup>17</sup>

A nation's military force would be expected to possess superiority and certain advantages in any confrontation with urban guerrillas. However, the military is constrained by the high risks of killing innocent victims and causing unacceptable damage. They cannot destroy what they are committed to protect. Governments possess great military and nonmilitary resources for mobilization, but often the lack of an urban strategy or doctrine for their employment benefits the guerrillas.

Most international terrorists captured in the past 5 years have not been punished. It is obvious, therefore, that prevention, though often difficult, is much easier than dealing with terrorists once their acts have been committed and the traditional systems of diplomacy, military strategy, and response break down. The activities of US personnel abroad have been seriously affected by terrorist acts for a number of years. Since 1968, seven senior US diplomats have been kidnapped by terrorists, and four US ambassadors or chiefs of mission have been killed. US servicemen have been killed by terrorists in the Philippines, Guatemala, Iran, and Germany.

Terrorist groups in the United States, who so far have seemed to prefer bombs to bazookas or rockets, have attacked such targets as the Statue of Liberty, the US Capitol, Wall Street, the Pentagon, Fraunces Tavern in New York, the OAS building, La Guardia Airport, and a number of foreign embassies and consulates. No US terrorist group currently appears to have the support necessary to force major political changes, but there is a potential danger that serious disruptions will be caused to the "flow" of US society. Terrorists may be able to collectively develop a climate conducive to revolutionary activity or bureaucratic overreaction. A real threat exists to US and foreign government personnel domestically and to US personnel abroad, both government and private. Domestically, the greatest threat is that foreign terrorists will begin to use the United States for their "demonstration" activities, much as Europe has been used for the past 3 or 4 years. A second danger is that foreign groups will use US groups to make demands on their behalf. Many US terrorist groups, such as the

Weathermen and the Symbionese Liberation Army, have been effectively suppressed by US authorities. New groups frequently emerge and disappear as issues and personalities change. None of these groups is large, but destructiveness is not always related to size of membership. The United States suffered many antigovernment acts during the years of racial militance and anti-Vietnam War protest. Since then, however, terrorism has become even more popular as a means of protest, although the issues now are Puerto Rican independence and big business. According to Mr. Clarence Kelley, Director of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, 89 bombings were attributed to terrorist activity in the United States last year, compared to 45 in 1974 and 24 in 1973. During the past 5 years there have been 255 such bombings, 122 firebombings, 45 sniping incidents, 120 shootings, 24 ambushes and 21 arsons. In 1975, 11 persons were killed in terrorist acts of violence, 72 people were injured, and property damage amounted to more than \$2.7 million. The deaths of at least 43 police officers and the wounding of 152 more have been linked to terrorists in the United States since 1971.<sup>18</sup>

The US response to terrorism's threat to the international system and to state sovereignty involves a combination of measures for deterrence and protection. The US Government refuses to pay any ransom or to release any prisoners, even when hostages are involved. It maintains the position that either terrorists must be appropriately punished by another government involved in the act or extradited to the United States for trial. A strategy of supporting bilateral agreements and multilateral conventions to suppress terrorism has been combined with a strategy of seeking support for instituting sanctions against states which harbor terrorists, and occasional unilateral responses involving diplomatic action. The official government policy concerning kidnapping of American officials—no ransom or blackmail—is not forced upon private companies since they must make their own decisions on the matter.

Although the situation in each country differs, certain principles will aid the development of an effective urban strategy for deterring and combating terrorism:

- Good, accurate, and timely intelligence is essential to determine and effectively counter guerrilla strength and tactics. Governments must use available resources to develop more sophisticated intelligence systems in order to be forewarned and take counter guerrilla offensives. Insurgent forces often place great emphasis on countering government

intelligence activities. They seek to infiltrate the police and the military and to create a network of informers throughout the society.

Urban areas present an almost limitless number of targets which security forces must protect against guerrilla attack. These include water supply and distribution systems, electric power facilities, storage areas, communications facilities, public places, and government buildings. Only good intelligence will allow an effective allocation of resources for improving surveillance and protection.

One common military problem is abundant information but too little intelligence.<sup>19</sup> The problem is complicated when deception is purposefully used to confuse intelligence analysts. Effective penetration of a guerrilla organization is therefore necessary for the development of a comprehensive picture of a movement's organization, capabilities, plans, objectives, and leadership. But, according to intelligence experts, "speed, accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness of information processing, particularly the collating and retrieval aspects, are of critical importance not only to the success of the intelligence effort but also to the overall success of the counterinsurgency program itself."<sup>20</sup>

Intelligence services need access to an information processing system capable of retrieving information in various forms and patterns for analysis. Criteria may include such characteristics as geographic location of the incident, individual or terrorist group involved, the type of activity, the date, time, targets, weapons involved or source of weapons. One such system developed several years ago by the US Air Force Office of Special Investigations assigned simple numerical codes to each preselected characteristic. These codes were then used individually or in combination as the basis for storage and retrieval.<sup>21</sup> Often such systems are mistakenly viewed as expensive, complicated gadgetry. Low cost, efficient, secure, but relatively simple systems are available from commercial sources. They can help employ lessons learned to determine trends and patterns and to help predict terrorist acts.

- There must be complete coordination and cooperation between civil and military authorities. Urban guerrilla and terrorist activities are primarily police matters until an insurgency escalates to an uncontrollable level. At that point, regular military forces may be required to protect the government and assure that essential services continue. The military role should be determined by established legal jurisdictions and procedures, the size of the terrorist forces, the scope and success of their activities, the effectiveness of the police, and the extent of international sponsorship of the terrorists. The military



position is supportive, and should be terminated as quickly as possible. Conventional armed forces should be used to attack insurgents only when absolutely necessary. Their use can increase popular support for the guerrillas by creating an exaggerated image of a repressive government attacking a few idealistic "political" rebels. Use of regular military forces can also exaggerate the strength of the guerrillas.

The government can sometimes compromise guerrillas' strategy by adopting their slogans or programs which have merit and advertise them as government policies. In fact, the guerrilla is often thwarted by the progressive political leader who accepts change. Civil-military cooperation is necessary to implement co-opted goals and to avoid intragovernmental misunderstanding and suspicion, which would inevitably weaken the government and serve the purpose of the insurgency.

In a serious counterinsurgency situation, there must be good cooperation and liaison not only among the police, the military, and government bureaucrats and administrators, but also with public utilities and services. Police and military should plan for the establishment of a unified crisis control center, and information and intelligence should be freely shared. Efforts also should be made to improve systems of personal identification. Stricter laws and punishment and accurate censuses can make the establishment of false identities more difficult for potential terrorists.

On September 25, 1972, President Nixon established the Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism to consider means to deter terrorism both in the United States and abroad, to establish government procedures, and to work with other governments and intelligence organizations. The Committee is chaired by the Secretary of State and composed of a number of Cabinet level and other high officials, including Secretary of Defense. The Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism Working Group (CCCT/WG) handles the day to day business for the Cabinet Committee and is comprised of designated senior representatives of the committee members. Federal officers, departments, and agencies are to cooperate fully with the Committee in carrying out its functions, and follow whatever policies, guidelines, standards, and procedures are established by the CCCT/WG.

The CCCT/WG meets every 2 weeks to exchange information and to discuss topics of mutual interest. When a major terrorist incident occurs, the Director of the Office to Combat Terrorism immediately forms an ad hoc task force, drawing on the resources of the relevant

agencies. Communications are established with the US Embassy concerned and a set of standard operating procedures based on previous incidents is set into motion. Critical decisions may be referred to the Cabinet Committee or to the President. After the crisis, "lessons learned" are reviewed by those persons who played an active role in the task force.

The Committee has made much progress in coordinating US Government antiterrorist activity and in avoiding duplication. Individual departments continue to manage their own programs dealing with terrorism, but now with greater coordination. The Cabinet Committee helps to avoid many potentially serious jurisdictional disputes as each agency seeks to protect its own organizational interest by becoming actively involved in decisionmaking. Despite its success thus far, the Committee needs to gain wider recognition and visibility.

- Effective doctrine and training are necessary in order to defeat the insurgency without counterproductive overreaction. Military training in an urban setting is difficult to accomplish because of the physical impracticality, but there is much that can be done to prepare a force for urban fighting and defense. Instruction on the problems of urban fighting and on countering guerrilla strategy is essential.

One of the primary goals of most guerrilla groups is to force the government to overreact, thereby alienating the population. Therefore, government forces should be trained in accurate target selection, and extreme restraint should be employed in the use of firepower and explosives. Great patience must be shown in opposing an insurgent movement. Indiscriminate arrests, mass detentions, and unwarranted brutality must be avoided. Counterterror terror, rather than solving the problem, is usually counterproductive in the long run.

Careful attention must also be paid to command and control because of the difficulties encountered in an urban situation. Specially-trained, commando type police units are probably the best defense against most urban guerrilla tactics.

- Specialized equipment must be developed and tested for use in urban environments. The equipment used by most military forces today is not designed for city warfare. The US Army is currently seeking to test its equipment in an urban setting, but conclusive evaluations for many weapons and munitions are incomplete. It has been found that most of these equipment problems can be solved relatively easily once the data is available. The problems are usually related to target selectivity and terrain. Military FM radios, for example, do not work

well in cities, and the M-16 rifle has too high a velocity. In addition to testing and modifying existing weapons, new developments such as infrared sighting and observing devices for night operations, wall-bridging equipment, rubble clearers, portable barricades, and foams are being designed specifically to use in an urban setting. New nonlethal crowd restraints, such as rubber bullets, irritating chemicals, and water cannons may be very effective in civil disturbance situations when mass actions have been agitated by urban insurgents for their own purposes.

Many existing resources, such as helicopters, can be employed effectively in urban settings. They are particularly useful during sustained insurgency for reconnaissance, liaison, nonlethal gas dispersion, and moving troops and supplies in densely-populated areas where there is much congestion or where parts of a city are blockaded or controlled by an insurgent force. Brigadier General L. C. Cooper, writing on the British experience in Northern Ireland, notes:

The main advantage of a helicopter in an internal security situation is that it adds a new dimension to observation and, what is more, one that is denied to the enemy. It enables the observer to see round corners and to see great distances... The helicopter is also available as a mobile command post.<sup>22</sup>

In general, sophisticated weaponry is not required in countering urban insurgents. Certain specialized equipment can offer advantages, however, and would be worth the expense of development and procurement. Different kinds of maps must also be developed for use in cities—maps which show the true three-dimensional effect of the city.

- The creation of good public relations—national and international—is important in effectively combating urban insurgency. Because insurgents, particularly terrorists, seek publicity by their acts, and are inspired by it, governments must solicit the support of the media. Irresponsible reporting by the mass media can easily create public panic or loss of confidence in the government. Perhaps the best approach is to recommend that the media report terrorist acts without sensationalism, and that fair credit be given to official government antiguerrilla strategy and successes. For its part, the government must recognize the political/media impact of certain activities. This factor should be taken into account in strategy formulation. For instance, captured guerrillas should be prosecuted under criminal statutes rather than for political offenses.

The military services must select public information officers from



among their most capable men. These officers must understand the art of journalism as well as military tactics and organization. They must know current facts and their background, and the truth must be disseminated as quickly as possible in order to dispel rumors, to counter guerrilla propaganda, and to restore faith in the government. Rumor control centers might be established in an emergency.

Today's rapid dissemination of information and the interdependence of nations require that international opinion also be considered in all policymaking, and that it be accurately informed. A hostile international perception of a counterinsurgency effort is one of the primary goals of the guerrillas.

- International cooperation will be required before terrorism can be suppressed. Differences in perceived threat and in defining "legitimate" terrorism have made international cooperation in punishing terrorists very difficult. It is also difficult to institutionalize programs to combat terrorism because most nations, including the United States, do not want to abandon the principle of asylum. In the past, the United States has accepted many refugees who have clearly committed illegal acts under the law of some Communist or other repressive government. A real moral question is involved when citizens are denied any legal method of leaving a country. Nevertheless, the nations of the hemisphere should continue to seek support for international conventions against terrorism, including sanctions against nations which harbor terrorists. This may be done by imposing trade, communications, or civil aviation boycotts. Otherwise, the Israeli strategy of surgical military action (Uganda, 1976) may become the only alternative available to governments for protecting their citizens abroad from international terrorism. Foreign powers which support insurgent activities must be exposed when full, convincing evidence against them is available. Such exposure may discourage further external assistance or increase popular opposition to the guerrilla group.

Although it is permissible under international law to assist a government threatened by insurgency, too much foreign intervention can create sympathy for the urban guerrillas and can imply government weakness. Therefore, each nation should use its own resources to the fullest extent before requesting external assistance.

Tight immigration procedures can do much to limit international terrorism. Inter-American cooperation in opposing terrorism also may be improved by increased coordination and planning through the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB). For example, an advisory group

could be established to refine urban tactical doctrine or to seek new ways to increase the sharing of intelligence which might be of common interest.

In summary, the American republics can do a great deal to thwart urban insurgency by sharing information and experiences to perfect an urban strategy. An effective urban strategy requires complete civil-military cooperation, improved training to prevent overreaction, effective public information programs to ensure good public relations and understanding, efficient intelligence to determine guerrilla plans and capabilities, and specialized equipment appropriate for the environment. The situation in each nation is unique, but all nations share a common vulnerability. Today's rapid communication and transportation systems, and the interdependence of nations, mean that one nation's lack of an effective urban strategy makes all other nations a little less secure. As a result, greater international cooperation in fighting terrorism is essential. An urban strategy must employ flexibility, patience, and restraint. Perhaps most importantly it must be recognized that military forces can control the situation with an effective urban strategy, but in most cases they can't solve the more fundamental problems which created the insurgency. Those solutions are economic, social, and political, and they are much more difficult.

## ENDNOTES

1. Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 1.
2. Brian Michael Jenkins, *High Technology Terrorism and Surrogate War: The Impact of New Technology on Low Level Violence*, p. 8.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Robert W. Fox, *Urban Population Growth Trends in Latin America*, p. 6.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
8. Sam C. Sarkesian, *Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 484.
9. John L. Sorenson, *Urban Insurgency Cases*, p. 8.
10. Donald C. Hodges, ed., *Philosophy of the Urban Guerrilla, The Revolutionary Writings of Abraham Guillen*.
11. Richard Clutterbuck, *Protest and the Urban Guerrilla*, pp. 284-285.
12. Jenkins, *An Urban Strategy for Guerrillas and Governments*, pp. 4-8.
13. Carlos Marighella, "Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla," *Terror and Urban Guerrillas, A Study of Tactics and Documents*, ed. by Jay Mallin, pp. 91-105.
14. Marighella, pp. 81, 84.
15. Marighella, p. 103.
16. Charles A. Russell, "Transnational Terrorism," *Air University Review*, January-February 1976, pp. 26-35.
17. Sorenson, *Urban Insurgency Cases*, p. 7.
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20. Dr. Charles A. Russell and Major Robert E. Hildner, "Intelligence and Information Processing in Counter-Insurgency," *Air University Review*, p. 47.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-56.
22. Brigadier General L. C. Cooper, "Some Aspects of Conflict in Ulster," *Military Review*, September 1973, pp. 90-91.



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capabilities of the urban terrorists' arsenal have grown enormously. The authors assert that a new strategy for deterring and combating urban guerrillas must be developed, and they set forth principles that will aid in the formulation of such a strategy. ↗

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